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SWEET SILVER IN SOCHI

Canadian Denny Morrison celebrates during the flower ceremony after winning silver for the men's 1,000-metre speedskating race at the Winter Olympics in Sochi Wednesday. For more from Sochi, see pages 26-28. DAVID J. PHILLIP/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

It's 'absurd' city won't release full traffic study: CTF

Portage Avenue fire hall. Mayor Katz says legal department must 'have a reason' for redacting parts of study

BERNICE PONTANILLA
bernice.pontanilla@metronews.ca

It's "absurd" that a heavily censored traffic study done before a Portage Avenue fire hall was built is not being fully released, says Colin Craig of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation.

"Why on earth is it that we just had a meeting of EPC and not one of them said, 'Administration, did you have any concerns?' Why aren't they asking the question?" said Craig after Wednesday's meeting.

Craig said Mayor Sam Katz should have looked into the study as soon as the CTF raised safety concerns.

Katz said while he has not seen the traffic study, he believes the city's administration that the location was advantageous as it provided immediate access to Portage, Century Street and Kenaston Boulevard.

"If there is anything blacked out, obviously (the legal department) has to have a reason for doing that, and I certainly would like to hear what the reasons are," said Katz after the meeting.

Katz also refuted comments made by Coun. Paula Havixbeck that she didn't know the traffic report existed, adding it was mentioned during two Assiniboia community committee meetings in July of 2011 and 2012.

EPC agreed with an earlier decision by the infrastructure renewal and public works committee to make public the documents that were given the all-clear under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

This now goes to city council for a final vote.

Quoted

"This is absurd what's going on down here — we're talking about a traffic study for a fire hall. If they can't release that, they may as well just pack it up and go home." Colin Craig, of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation

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Valentine's Day theme adds oomph to Mardi Gras party

Let yourself go.
Organizers catering to those in love and those looking this year

SHANE GIBSON
shane.gibson@metronews.ca

There will be more than just the smell of mouth-watering Cajun cuisine in the air at this year's Winnipeg Mardi Gras.

Because part of the weekend-long party falls on Valentine's Day, organizers have made sure to add a little love to the air at this year's party.

"We have entertainment and food all night long, so even if you have a valentine it's a great place to come after you have a nice romantic dinner," explained Bernice the Winnipeg Mardi Gras Girl, who has given up her last name to become the celebration's mascot and spokesperson. "There's dancing, there's shops, you can get your cards read, there's really something for everybody."

For those looking for a valentine, organizers will be handing out red heart pins for singles on Friday to help star-crossed lovers find each other easier, and a Dating Game styled game show will be held, giving a bachelor the chance to ask questions and then choose one of three eligible bachelorettes.

Friday's romantic theme will continue with a giant screen set up to project the tweets of Romeos to their Juliets throughout the night.

Both the Friday and Saturday nights will include all the excitement of previous years — like acrobats, drag queens and painted women — and of course the giant oyster and wine bar will be set up with new favourites including bourbon flamed garlic shrimp and New Orleans rosé farfalle pasta.

Music is also on the menu, with Dwayne Dopsie and the Zydeco Hellraisers set to bang out tunes straight from the bayou.

"All in all it's a pretty sexy time," said Bernice, who told Metro she met her husband at the event seven years ago. "I'm proof that true love can be found at Winnipeg Mardi Gras."

At a glance

- Winnipeg Mardi Gras runs Feb. 14 to 15 at RBC Convention Centre Winnipeg. Go to winnipegmardigras.com for more information.

Love is on the menu at this year's Winnipeg Mardi Gras, running Feb. 14 to 15 at RBC Convention Centre Winnipeg.
CONTRIBUTED

Broadway

Local gets role in Les Misérables

Winnipeg native Samantha Hill has joined the list of Canadians in the cast of "Les Misérables" on Broadway.

She replaces University of Michigan musical theatre student Charlotte Maltby. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Charges laid in contraband-cigarettes seizure

Charges have been laid against two men after the seizure of more than 858,000 contraband cigarettes in the province.

Manitoba Finance says RCMP officers and department investigators stopped a vehicle pulling a trailer last Friday in the Falcon Lake area on suspicion that black market smokes were being brought into the province.

It's alleged that a search of the vehicle and trailer turned up thousands of cigarettes of mixed brands which were not marked or stamped for Manitoba tax purposes.

Tax-related charges are pending against two men from Fort Alexander, Man., who could each face fines of $1,000 to $10,000 or possibly six months in jail, as well as a triple tax penalty of more than $747,000.

The province says it stood to lose nearly a quarter of a million dollars in tax revenue if the tobacco had reached the black market.

The suspects, who have not been identified, have been released from custody.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

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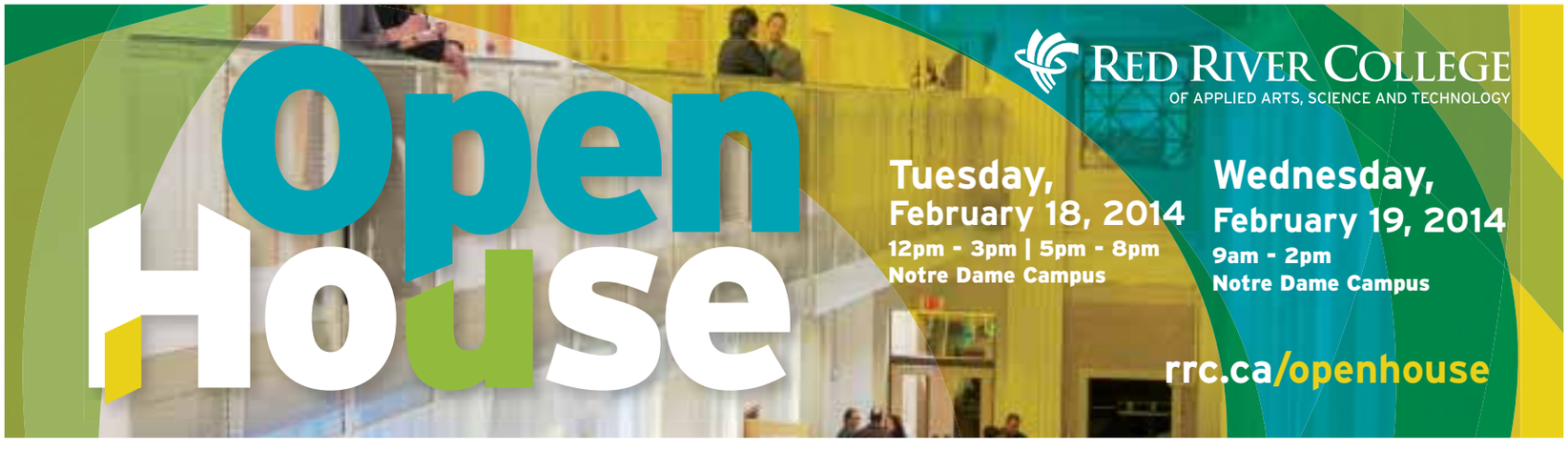

Gas leak closes part of Ness Avenue

Police had Ness Avenue blocked to traffic in both directions between Queen and Berry streets on Wednesday morning as crews worked to control a major gas leak in the area around 9:40 a.m. The leak was fixed and traffic was flowing again by 11 a.m. SHANE GIBSON/METRO

Need fine print on budget: Katz

Infrastructure. Mayor reserves judgment as critics attack feds for timid spending plan

BERNICE PONTANILLA
bernice.pontanilla@metronews.ca

Mayor Sam Katz said he's waiting to hear more details on the federal government's plans for infrastructure spending before grading the 2014 budget.

"There may be (some more money), we just don't know yet," Katz said after Wednesday's executive policy committee meeting.

"We're still waiting for the information on Building Canada … so it would be very difficult for me to say anything positive or negative until I see that."

Katz said Winnipeg is looking for "a long-term sustainable plan that we can use to address our infrastructure deficit, so we can correct what's going on in our city: sidewalks, roads, bridges, buildings, etc."

On Tuesday, federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty delivered a budget that was more deficit-slaying than infrastructure-spending.

Flaherty's 10th federal budget all but balances the books this fiscal year, leaving a negligible $2.9-billion shortfall heading into the 2015-16 election year — when Prime Minister Stephen Harper will go to the electorate sporting a surplus that could exceed $6 billion.

The Opposition NDP and several premiers slammed the move, arguing more money needs to be invested in job creation and infrastructure improvement.

WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS

Long-term funding

The $8.8-billion Building Canada Fund, which began in 2007, is set to end in 2014.

- It provided up to a maximum 50 per cent of the cash for projects related to drinking water, waste water, public transit and roads.

Inner beauty ain't enough for Cityplace

As the $3-million facelift of Cityplace's retail space continues, plans are coming along to make sure the outside of the building looks just as good as the inside, according to the head of the architecture firm behind the work.

Robert Eastwood, CEO and partner of Number Ten Architectural Group, told a lunch-hour meeting of the Building Owners and Managers Association of Manitoba on Wednesday about the various ideas being bantered about.

Those include adding window panels around the outside façade of the first two floors as well as awnings over the sidewalk to help connect the Manitoba Public Insurance-owned building to the vision of downtown's Sports, Hospitality and Entertainment District (SHED) plan.

"We're working with MPI to see what can occur that can connect this building with the sidewalk, the whole concept of the SHED and open it up," he said during his 40-minute discussion, noting the glass concept has already been implemented as part of Centre Venture's offices in the building.

Number Ten Architectural Group partner and CEO Robert Eastwood speaks to reporters on Wednesday. SHANE GIBSON/METRO

New life

"As you're going down the street you get this connectivity — you see people working in the office space, you see the light, you see the animation."

Robert Eastwood, CEO and partner of Number Ten Architectural Group, on the glass concept for Cityplace

"So as you're going down the street you get this connectivity — you see people working in the office space, you see the light, you see the animation."

Eastwood said the interior work on Cityplace's first and second floor of retail space should be complete by the fall. SHANE GIBSON/METRO

Insect control

Bean-counter the new bug boss

The City of Winnipeg has hired a finance co-ordinator to replace the city's departed bug boss.

A city spokesperson tells media the city has appointed Ken Nawolsky to head up the city's insect-control branch.

While Nawolsky has no formal entomology background, he worked for several years in the branch in varying roles.

Former bug boss Taz Stuart left the position abruptly last year.

METRO

$2,000 payout

Handi-Transit loses rights battle

A Winnipeg woman with an intellectual disability has won a human-rights complaint. Ruth Dopson used Handi-Transit to get to her daily job at a workshop for people with disabilities.

In 2007, Handi-Transit changed how it prioritizes customers; Dopson went from having a guaranteed ride every day to having to call and hope for one. Her advocates say that's because she doesn't have a full-time job on at least minimum wage — Dopson makes $55 a week. THE CANADIAN PRESS

No licence needed

Fishing free for all this weekend

The province is relaxing the rules for ice fishing this weekend, giving fishermen and women the chance to drop their lines without a licence.

"With free admission to our parks this month and free fishing over the Louis Riel Day long weekend, there's never been a better time to take advantage of the beauty of a Manitoba winter," said Conservation and Water Stewardship Minister Gord Mackintosh in a release Wednesday. METRO

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ADDICTION TREATMENT CENTRE

Georgia tells guests of Olympics to stay clear of Abkhazia

Breakaway territory.
The region remains a sticking point between the country and Russia

Georgia on Wednesday called on foreign visitors to the Winter Olympics to keep out of Abkhazia, a Russia-aligned breakaway territory just south of Sochi along the Black Sea coast.

The International Olympic Committee, however, said there was no reason not to go to Abkhazia.

Abkhazia declared independence shortly after Russian forces crushed the Georgian army in a brief 2008 war, but most of the world still considers it Georgian territory. Only Russia, Venezuela, Nicaragua and two Pacific island nations have recognized Abkhazia as an independent country.

Russia's attempts to facilitate travel across its border with Abkhazia, only five kilometres (three miles) south of Olympic venues, was "a provocation aimed at undermining the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia" and "misleading foreign citizens," the Georgian Foreign Ministry said in a statement. Asked the IOC's view on Olympics visitors going to Abkhazia, IOC spokesman Mark Adams said, "Why not?"

"The talks and exchanges between the two governments, that's entirely been to the two governments," he said. "In terms of going to Abkhazia ... well if it's safe, people will go there."

Alexandra Kosterina, spokeswoman for the Sochi organizers, refused to comment.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Talks

Russian President Vladimir Putin said Monday that he hoped the Games would help to mend fences and expressed a willingness to meet with his Georgian counterpart.

- The Georgian government responded positively.
- Mutual personal enmity had prevented any meeting between Putin and former Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili, whose term ended in November.

Child euthanasia.
Belgian bid expected to pass despite opposition

Belgian lawmakers clashed sharply on Wednesday over whether to grant terminally ill children the right to ask to die, a legal option already possessed by the country's adults.

The issue is pitting backers who see it as a question of mercy against opponents who claim the law is rushed, flawed and lacking medical rationale. Despite the spirited debate in the House of Representatives, the bill is widely expected to pass on Thursday.

"Our responsibility is to allow everybody to live, but also to die, in dignity," said Karine Lalieux, a Socialist member of the House of Representatives who favours extending Belgium's 2002 euthanasia law to minors under 18, with the added conditions that their parents approve and they understand what the decision means.

Sonja Becq, a Christian Democratic colleague, denounced the potential change, saying modern-day science is capable of relieving pain in very sick children until their illnesses runs their natural course.

"We cannot accept that euthanasia be presented as a 'happy ending,'" she said. Belgium sets legal limits on who can legally acquire cigarettes and alcohol, she said — so why not for euthanasia?

The Senate, the other chamber of the federal legislature, adopted the legislation by a wide margin in December. If it passes in the House, all that would be needed for child euthanasia to become legal in Belgium is the signature of King Philippe, normally a formality.

The only other countries to have legalized euthanasia are two of Belgium's neighbours, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. In the Netherlands, children between 12 and 15 may be euthanized with parents' permission, while those who are 16 or 17 must notify their parents beforehand. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nigeria.
Extremists attack northeast town

Hundreds of Islamic extremists posing as soldiers attacked a northeast Nigerian town for hours, killing 39 people and razing a mosque and more than 1,000 homes, survivors said Wednesday.

In the ruins of the burned-out mosque, bodies covered in cloth lay ready for burial Wednesday, including three small shrouds covering children who did not look more than 10 years old.

"Why us? Why us?" one woman wailed, trying to understand why militants set on creating an Islamic state in Nigeria would attack a town of mainly Muslim farmers.

Numerous villages in the area have been attacked and hundreds have been killed in recent months despite a nine-month-long military state of emergency.

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Edmonton. Backpack offers grieving mother answers in son's suicide

Jan Thorpe finally has some answers about her son's death.

Jonathan Langille's backpack was returned to his mother Tuesday, less than a week after the 19-year-old was killed after stepping off the platform in front of an LRT train at Coliseum Station in Edmonton.

Following the accident, Thorpe made a public plea for help finding the backpack, which had been picked up by a bystander who watched as Langille took his own life.

"The girl who took it called us last night," said Thorpe. "She was very sorry about what happened."

In the backpack, Thorpe said, Langille left his journal, which included information about why he took his own life.

"He said he was overwhelmed," she said.

Jonathan Langille FACEBOOK

Thorpe said the family doesn't plan on pressing charges against the woman, who told Thorpe she was using drugs at the time she took the backpack. Thorpe said she hopes the young woman is able to get some help.

"Life is very short; never take anyone for granted," Thorpe said. "Jonathan showed no signs. If you feel like you are in a dark place, talk to somebody."

LEAH GERMAIN/METRO IN EDMONTON

Inquest. Cops should 'stop shouting' at mentally ill, focus on diffusion tactics

When police encounter an emotionally disturbed person, officers should put more emphasis on defusing the situation through communication, particularly if those people don't respond to shouted police commands, a coroner's jury recommended Wednesday.

The suggestion is one of dozens put forward by a five-member jury in an inquest into the deaths of three mentally ill Toronto residents who were shot by police.

"If the EDP (emotionally disturbed person) has failed to respond to standard initial police commands … train officers to stop shouting those commands and attempt different defusing communication strategies," the jury recommended.

The president of the Toronto Police Association said his officers are open to anything that improves police and community relations, they already do try to de-escalate such situations.

"Could it be better? Yes. We can always look for improvement," said Mike McCormack. "But right now that's how we do respond. Our officers do not want to use lethal force unless we absolutely have to, so we de-escalate and try to maintain that de-escalation for as long as we can." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty gestures during question period in the House of Commons in Ottawa on Wednesday. SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Income splitting exposes Tory rift

Tensions. Powerful Conservative ministers make contradictory statements on Harper campaign promise, but who spoke out of turn?

Two of the most powerful men in the Conservative cabinet have openly contradicted one another on a key campaign promise — a split that speaks to the different ideologies and allegiances in the Tory caucus.

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty started the ball rolling Wednesday by candidly questioning the wisdom of expanding income splitting for Canadian families.

During the 2011 election, Prime Minister Stephen Harper promised to bring in the measure once the federal books were balanced. Allowing couples with children to split their income would mean parents could pool their income together in order to qualify for a lower tax bracket.

"I would pay down public debt and reduce taxes more, myself, but I am only one person," Flaherty said in a post-budget interview before the Ottawa Chamber of Commerce.

But Employment Minister Jason Kenney insisted the campaign promise would be kept, a sentiment echoed by Treasury Board President Tony Clement.

"We made a platform commitment to introduce income splitting when we get to a balanced budget; we'll get to a balanced budget next year, that's very clear," Kenney said.

So who spoke out of turn? Flaherty or Kenney?

One senior Conservative suggested Harper actually has his own reservations about income splitting. The Tory suggested social conservatives within the party would be more in favour of such a plan because it appeals to traditional families where only one parent works.

Other Conservatives speculated that Flaherty is feeling free to speak his mind because he has one foot out the door.

There have been tensions between Flaherty and Kenney recently over Toronto Mayor Rob Ford. Flaherty is a friend of Ford's, and reacted angrily when Kenney called on Ford to step down.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Discussion. North Korean demands manage to stall high-level talks with South Korea

The highest-level talks between the rival Koreas in years ended late Wednesday with little progress because of North Korea's call for the delay of annual military drills between Seoul and Washington set for later this month, officials said.

Seoul officials said the meeting was requested by North Korea, which has launched a recent charm offensive after raising tensions last spring with repeated threats to fire nuclear-tipped missiles against Seoul and Washington.

Later this month, the two Koreas are to hold reunions of families separated since the 1950-53 Korean War. It would be the first such reunions in more than three years.

North Korea also demanded South Korea delay the annual military drills set to begin Feb. 24 with the United States until the end of the family reunions, which are scheduled to start Feb. 20 and end five days later, the statement said. South Korea refused, saying it cannot link a purely humanitarian matter to a military issue.

North Korean chief delegate Won Tong Yon, centre. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Gay rights. Judge rules that Kentucky must recognize out of state same-sex marriages

U.S. District Judge John G. Heyburn II concluded Wednesday that Kentucky must recognize same-sex marriages performed in other states, striking down part of the state's marriage ban and saying Kentucky's laws treat gays and lesbians differently in a "way that demeans them." The constitutional ban on same-sex marriage was approved by voters in 2004.

"Assigning a religious or traditional rationale for a law does not make it constitutional when that law discriminates against a class of people without other reasons," wrote Heyburn, an appointee of former President George H.W. Bush.

The decision came in lawsuits brought by four gay and lesbian couples seeking to force the state to recognize their out-of-state marriages.

Heyburn did not rule on whether the state could be forced to perform same-sex marriages. The question was not included in the lawsuit.

The news comes as two homosexual couples challenging a ban in neighbouring Texas on same-sex marriage took their case to federal court on Wednesday in the wake of recent legal victories in two other conservative states.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. South crippled by second coming of winter storms

A Georgia Department of Transportation sign warns drivers of winter weather as they travel a bleak section of Highway 141 on Wednesday in Norcross, Ga. The second wintry storm in two weeks to hit the normally balmy U.S. South encrusted highways, trees and power lines in ice, knocking out electricity to more than 350,000 homes and businesses. At least nine traffic deaths across the region were blamed on the treacherous weather.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

After 18 years, Florida boy's killer executed

Juan Carlos Chavez. Murderer given lethal injection in Florida jail despite supreme court appeal

A man has been executed in Florida for raping and killing a 9-year-old boy 18 years ago, a death that spurred the victim's parents to press nationwide for stronger sexual predator confinement laws.

Authorities say 46-year-old Juan Carlos Chavez was pronounced dead at 8:17 p.m. Wednesday after a lethal injection at Florida State Prison.

Chavez abducted Jimmy Ryce at gunpoint after the boy got off a school bus on Sept. 11, 1995, in rural southwestern Miami-Dade County.

Ryce's parents turned the tragedy's pain into a push for stronger U.S. laws regarding confinement of sexual predators and improved police procedures in missing child cases. Their foundation provided hundreds of free canines to law enforcement agencies to aid in searches for children.

Last-minute appeals temporarily delayed Wednesday's planned execution as Chavez's most recent round of state and federal court appeals focused on claims that Florida's lethal injection procedure is unconstitutional, that he didn't get due process during clemency hearings and that he should have an execution stay to pursue additional appeals in the federal courts.

The Florida Supreme Court, however, refused Wednesday morning to stay the execution to allow Chavez time to pursue those challenges, and the U.S. Supreme Court followed suit hours later. The appeals prompted a more than two-hour delay in Chavez's execution.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lethal injection

Drug temporarily blocked

A federal judge has temporarily blocked a pharmacy from selling a drug to the Missouri Department of Corrections for use in an upcoming execution. A lawsuit filed by Missouri death row inmate Michael Taylor argued the drug will cause Taylor "inhumane pain."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Canada Bread sold to Mexican firm for $1.83B

That's a lot of dough. Maple Leaf bakes up tasty deal to off-load division to baking giant Grupo Bimbo

Canada Bread has struck an agreement to be acquired by one of the world's largest bread companies in a transaction valued at $1.83 billion.

Grupo Bimbo, based in Mexico, said Wednesday it will buy Canada's dominant breadmaker with the support of Maple Leaf Foods, which owns a 90 per cent stake in the operations.

What Grupo Bimbo gains from buying Canada Bread is a position in the Canadian marketplace and the ownership of popular brands like Dempster's and Bon Matin.

"The company fits exactly within our strategic soft spot as a leader in its domestic market," Grupo Bimbo chief executive Daniel Servitje said in a conference call.

"(This is) a new market for Grupo Bimbo which helps strengthen our presence in the Americas."

The transaction also ends Maple Leaf Foods' pursuit of a buyer for the bakery division, which it announced last October. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Slicing off divisions

Maple Leaf Foods is in the midst of a restructuring plan to improve the profits of its overall business, which is primarily focused on meat products. It has already sold various divisions and hopes to complete the process by next year.

Bosnia. Unrest due in part to failed privatizations of state-owned companies

A Bosnian protester sets a local government building on fire during protests in the Bosnian town of Tuzla last week. AMEL EMRIC/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The recent violence in Bosnia, with scenes of burning government buildings and protesters pelting police with stones, has many root causes. One of them is the failed privatizations of state-owned companies.

When Bosnia abandoned communism about two decades ago, officials devised a plan that wouldn't mean mass layoffs for state workers. It was supposed to be a smooth transition after the 1992-1995 war that left 100,000 dead and devastated the country's infrastructure.

More than 80 per cent of privatizations have failed, becoming a core reason behind Bosnia's worst unrest since the end of the war. Many well-connected tycoons have swept into these companies, stripping them of their assets, declaring bankruptcy and leaving thousands without jobs or with minimal pay. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

United Auto Workers

Volkswagen to get das auto union in the U.S.?

Workers at Volkswagen's lone U.S. plant in Tennessee are kicking off a three-day election about whether they want to be represented by the United Auto Workers union.

If the union succeeds, the Chattanooga plant would become the first among foreign automakers in the South to unionize. The election begins Wednesday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Fourth-quarter results

Air Canada shares hit turbulence

Air Canada vowed it won't be thrown off course in 2014 even though its shares went into a tailspin Wednesday after severe weather and a weaker dollar hurt fourth-quarter results and promised to inflict more pain in the new year. THE CANADIAN PRESS

U.S.-Canada relations

Time to prep for post-Obama era, says Jim Prentice

It's high time Canada started looking beyond the Obama era if it wants to push economic integration with the United States to a new level, says former Conservative Cabinet Minister Jim Prentice. That includes pushing for approval of the Keystone XL pipeline, which has been stalled by U.S. domestic politics, Prentice said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market Minute

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TSX 13,900.49 (+ 19.50)

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You could be a millionaire!

Emirati consultant Abdulrahman Mansour Al Serkal presents a drone prototype as a part of an initiative by the Prime Minister's Office during the Dubai Government Summit in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Wednesday. An adviser to Dubai's ruler says the United Arab Emirates intends to develop drone technology for government services and has launched a $1 million US international competition for the best innovative use of unmanned aircraft to help improve the lives of people. KAMRAN JEBREILI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

My name was **Gurjit Bharij** before marriage, now I want to change it to Gurjit Bains.

I got married on Oct. 25, 2010, now all my identifications are as **Gurjit Bains** and I live at 310-1225 Leila Ave. Winnipeg MB R2P 2Y6 CANADA

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NUMBER OF HAPPY COUPLES: 12

HE SAYS

John Mazerolle
metronews.ca

Normally I'd say Valentine's Day is a holiday that should be cut short like its decapitated namesake.

Normally I'd argue it's not a real holiday unless I'm earning time and a half.

Normally I'd suggest that the only reason Valentine's receives any attention at all is that it lands when the weather is barren and any real holidays are far away. It's like a stranger in a bar when the lights come on. Our time with it might be awkward and trashy, but we'll take what we can get.

But I won't say any of that because I have a girlfriend for the first Valentine's this decade. So — just in case she cares — Valentine's is a wonderful, splendiferous day (wheee!) and I can't wait to spend it with her in whatever reasonably priced restaurant she desires.

As a loving tribute to my return to coupledom, I offer this fragrant bouquet of information:

Valentine's Day By The Numbers:

1: The loneliest number.

2: The least lonely number.

3: The soon-to-be-lonely-again number.

4: The polygam-est number.

Relationships

13,491,617: Number of Canadians who would laugh in your face if you asked them out right now.

12: Happy couples.

700: Percentage spike in the crime rate since same-sex couples were allowed to marry and society crumbled.

1.3: Median number of children it will take to salvage your crumbling relationship.

580,000: Number of times someone will say, "I don't know, what do you wanna do?" on Valentine's Day (average three per couple).

170: Number of guys pretending they like Michael Bublé at any given moment.

5: Number of days after Valentine's you can wait before dumping your partner, guilt-free.

0: Number of unrequited loves thinking about you right now.

Gifts

$356: Minimum amount your partner will spend on you if they really love you.

32: Number of insect larvae legally permitted in the chocolates you're about to receive.

15: Number of years until corporations automatically deduct a minimum $100 directly from your chequing account as part of a Mandatory Incidental Love Fee, or MILF.

8,732: Number of relationships that will spark with the heat of a thousand suns thanks to the gift of a heart-shaped doughnut.

60,000: Approximate number of bees killed annually for Bee Mine? card industry.

$1.4 billion: Value of all Valentine's cards purchased in North America.

1.4 seconds: Average time spent glancing at card.

14,541: Number of Canadians unemployed in the candy, floral and gift card business because of you and your friends' cynical attitudes.

Fewer than 12: Number of minutes I spent on research.

ZOOM

Did Russia get this wrong?

COURTESY GREG WYSHYNSKI/YAHOO SPORTS

Rings' colours not tied to continents

No, the different-coloured Olympic rings don't correspond to specific continents.

But you'd be forgiven for thinking differently if you're going to or from Sochi's airport.

Five enormous concrete sculptures of the rings welcome visitors, each labelled in bold letters, in Russian and English, with the name of a continent: Africa, Asia, Australia (pictured), Europe, and the Americas.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ALEXANDER ZEMLIANICHENKO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

In actuality...

- International Olympic Committee spokesman Mark Adams says "the rings are not assigned to each continent."
- When Pierre de Coubertin, considered the founder of the modern Olympics, designed the rings a century ago, he chose black, red, yellow, green and blue because every flag in the world bore at least one of those colours, according to the Olympic Museum.

Clickbait

HANNAH ZITNER
hannah.zitner@metronews.ca

JOSH SEMANS/FLICKR

So maybe those piano or violin lessons in elementary school didn't exactly stick, but surely you remember a scale or two. Test your musical memory, or just have fun making music with these apps that turn your phone into a handheld musical "instrument." Warning: This will annoy pretty much anyone in earshot and you will have way more fun creating "songs" than anyone will have listening to them.

Shaker:

Turn your phone into a pocket percussion centre. From the triangle to the tambourine to the tam tam, this free iTunes app has the drum section of your band covered.

Harmonica:

Both Apple and Android have their eyes on the handheld harmonica (oh wait, real ones are also handheld), but the Android version lets users get up close with their phones and play with their mouth (option for hands too, if you don't trust where your phone's been).

Virtuoso Piano 3:

Just like riding a bike, once you learn to play Heart and Soul you never forget. Or so no one's ever said. Test the theory and tickle the ivories on your phone.

Twitter

@metropicks asked: Canada's men's hockey team plays Norway Thursday. Should fighting be allowed in Olympic hockey?

@CALanuza: Yes, it brings excitement to the game; Remember this guys are pro athletes.. #Sochi2014 #yyc

@Dweller15: off course, what kind of question is it? What a hokey without fight?

@cndneh: why should fighting be allowed at all?

@Mr_B_Robertson: No. The greater the threat of injury to NHL players, the greater the chance the NHL won't let its players go the Olympics.

@kkjohal769: NO!!fighting is not necessary send the right message to our young people

@larrington: with fighting allowed, world does not take NHL ice hockey seriously as a sport; it's just entertainment.

@MainStPoodle: Yes. And growling, chasing and biting.

Follow @metropicks and take part in our daily poll.

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Send us your comments: winnipegletters@metronews.ca

metro

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Ex-metalcore musician finds his soft side in playing solo

Northcote. Singer-songwriter says he got addicted to playing alone in front of a crowd

BACKSTAGE PASS
Jared Story
winnipeg@metronews.ca

With his smoky voice and anthemic punk-tinged folk songs, Northcote, a.k.a. singer-songwriter Matt Goud, often gets compared to Bruce Springsteen, but his musical background is a little bit heavier than The Boss.

The Carlyle, Sask., native was a member of Means, a Regina metalcore band that took its cues from such heavyweights as Misery Signals, Shai Hulud and Winnipeg's own Comeback Kid. But when Means broke up in 2008, Goud decided to "take a step back from loud music."

"I wanted to try and write more personal songs," said Goud, 28. "I got addicted to getting on stage in front of people alone. It's a scary feeling. Playing bars solo, you can't demand everyone's attention like you can with a loud guitar or a big drum part, you have to find a different way to do it. I just got into that feeling."

Since going solo, Goud has released an EP and two full-length albums. The 28-year-old said he's still learning to express himself artistically, but he considers his latest album, 2013's Northcote, to be his most confident and authentic release yet.

"My first full-length, Gather No Dust (2010), when I listen to that record I hear a very shy person who's kind of tentative because that's where I was at," Goud said.

"For this record I wanted to turn that around a little bit, because when you get to do your art, your expression, whether it's dancing, painting or acting, you get to be the person you want to be. I wanted to overcome that cloud of shyness and be more assertive with this record."

Produced by Colin Stewart at The Hive in Vancouver, the album sees Goud joined by a few guest musicians, including Kathryn Calder of The New Pornographers.

Goud said that group element is one reason he chose to go by Northcote instead of his actual name. Also, it makes for way less confusion.

"It's spelled different, but my name is pronounced 'Matthew Good,'" Goud said. "My parent's friends at home in Carlyle think I'm really famous because they hear him on the radio all the time. They think I'm up for Juno nominations. 'Wow, Matt is doing really good in his career.'"

Quoted

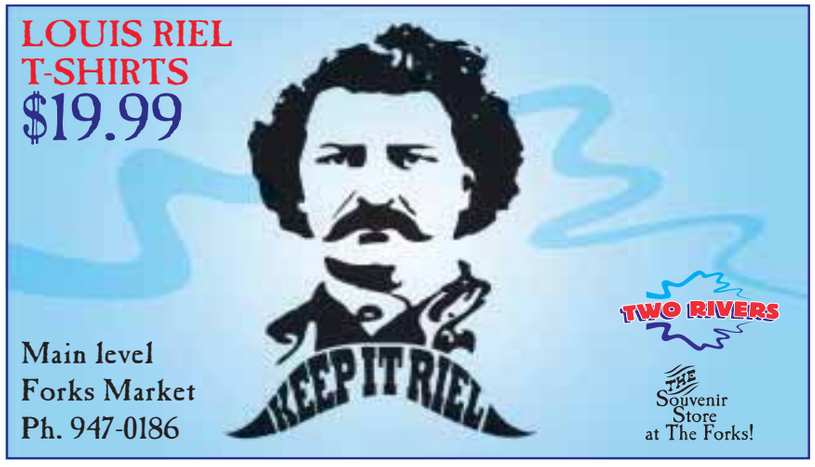
"My parent's friends at home in Carlyle think I'm really famous because they hear him on the radio all the time. They think I'm up for Juno nominations. 'Wow, Matt is doing really good in his career.'"

Matt Goud, on being confused with Matthew Good

Details

When, where and tickets. Northcote plays the Park Theatre on Monday, Feb. 17. Dave Hause of The Loved Ones is also on the bill. Tickets are $12 at the Park, Music Trader and ticketbreak.com or $15 at the door. Showtime is 8 p.m.

Northcote plays the Park Theatre on Monday along with The Loved Ones front man Dave Hause. CONTRIBUTED



Hey girl, Alex Pettyfer just wants to fall in love

Be mine? Star of Endless Love claims he's just a big puppy dog when it comes to matters of the heart

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News in Hollywood

Endless Love, starring Alex Pettyfer, opens on Friday. CONTRIBUTED

Alex Pettyfer is sorry to say he's a hopeless romantic at heart, which actually made signing on for the remake of Endless Love a no-brainer. Of course, we don't necessarily think there's anything wrong with being a softie.

This seems like a pretty intense film to make, emotionally. How did you approach it?
Well, the most difficult thing about making this movie was that when you're 23 or 24, which is how old I am, you want to be 30. You want to be looked upon as a man. And I'm playing 18 years of age, and you kind of have to go back to that naïve way of thinking and that childlike energy. That was the hardest thing for me — the most fun, but the hardest.

I don't remember feeling that naïve and childlike at 18.
Yeah, we all think we know everything when we're 18.

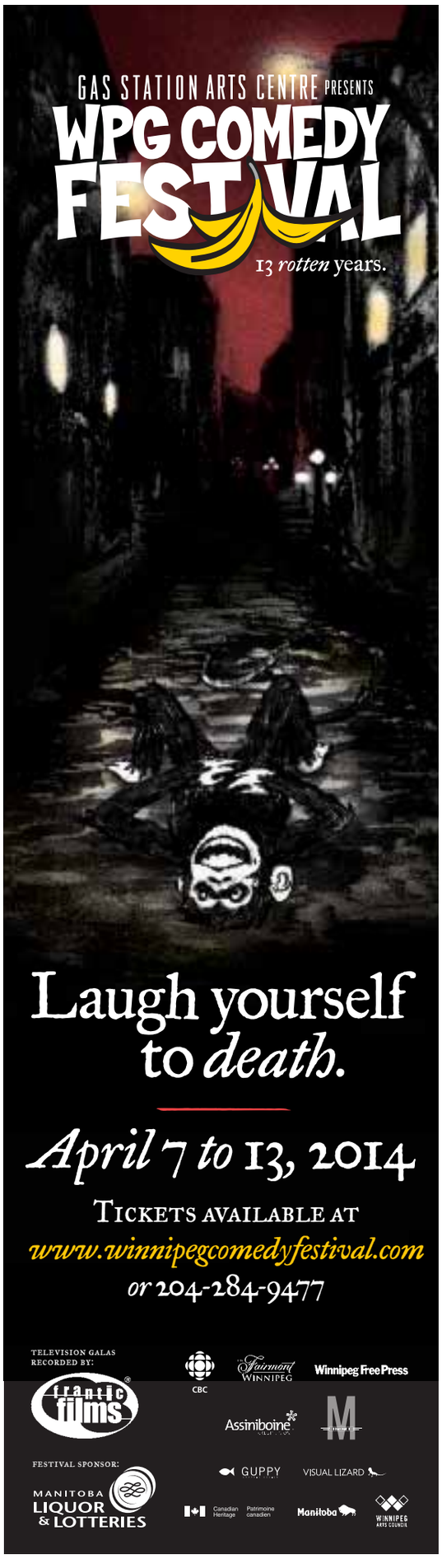
The more a movie focuses on romance, the more some people will use that as an excuse to ask about your personal life. How do you cope with that?
I just say no. I'm very blunt. I don't really care. I don't really answer that.

What's your own personal opinion of romantic films in general?
I love romantic films. I love Love Actually, I love Bridget Jones. I'm sad in that sense — I'm a sucker for a good romcom. And I wanted to make one. I'm so lucky that I've been given this opportunity to do a movie like this. I'm a hopeless romantic.

I don't think that's sad, to say that you like rom-coms.
Yeah, well… I mean, it's sometimes tough for a man to admit that they're a hopeless romantic.

I don't know, I feel like I've met quite a few in my time.
You have? You've met some hopeless romantic men? Well that's good. At least I'm not alone in that.

Are there any other directors you're just dying to work with?
I'd love to work (David) Fincher. The way he makes movies I find very interesting, the technique he uses. He does a lot of takes. He believes that the mentality of the actor fades after a certain amount of takes and then rebuilds his consciousness in a different light so that the view on the scene becomes different. So he does, like, 60 or 70 takes.



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Legendary songwriter Dr. John, now 73, will be releasing a tribute to Louis Armstrong. GETTY IMAGES

Dr. John rocks on

No slowing down. Iconic songwriter talks to Metro about his tribute to Louis Armstrong and a return to psychedelic blues

A legendary songwriter and eccentric showman, Malcolm John "Mac" Rebennack Jr., is best known to the rest of us as Dr. John. Now 73, he has been making music since the 1950s. His crazy concoctions of blues, jazz, zydeco and possessed voodoo psychedelia extend to more than 30 records and countless collaborations. He's performed with the Stones, Sonny and Cher, Zappa and Spiritualized.

One of the Muppets was even created in his likeness (Dr. Teeth). Ladies and Gentlemen, Dr. John …

So you're already working on a new album?

Well, it's a tribute to Louis Armstrong. Louis came to me in a dream and said, "Do my stuff your way." And that's what I did. We'll finish it up pretty soon I think.

The last time we spoke, you had just released your record about Katrina. Now that more time has passed, do you see a new New Orleans?

Well, in some ways it's like the whole lower Ninth Ward — they haven't done anything. It's been pretty much left to its own devices and that's a shame. ... There were just so many musicians that were from there, you know. I wonder what they'd think to see that whole neighborhood is gone. That's sad to me. But listen, we're gonna make the people warmer when we get there.

When you recorded Locked Down, did you see it as a return to the psychedelic blues of your early work? How influential was Dan Auerbach?

Well, actually Dan was thinking of some of the stuff like that. I think he did an excellent job. ... Actually, he is an old-school cat. I mean he's a lot older than his age … and that's a good thing. METRO

In light of the news that Blue Ice Pictures bought the film and TV rights to Robyn Doolittle's Crazy Town: The Rob Ford Story, the Metro editorial team started speculating who should play Toronto's titular titan. Here are our top three picks:

LIZ BROWN
liz.brown@metronews.ca

John Goodman

An overwhelming number picked the man best known as Dan Conner. He's got the girth, yes, but he's also proven he can play the wildcard act with aplomb — witness his turn as the 'back in 'Nam' referencing Walter Sobchak in The Big Lebowski. Our resident film expert Richard Crouse wasn't convinced though: "He'd bring the baggage of previous roles to the film."

Kevin James

There'd be a wicked sense of irony in casting the man who starred in I Now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry as the Pride Parade-evading Ford. And as Metro's film writer Steve Gow notes, James has the physicality for the role. "No one could physically emulate the bombastic and blundering nature of Rob Ford like the dude who played Paul Blart: Mall Cop."

Meryl Streep

More than a few Metro folk delved into arthouse territory, selecting an actress to play Ford. There were murmurs of Tilda Swinton, but ultimately the role was awarded to the greatest actress of our time. "Meryl Streep could play anyone," noted copy editor Rita Zhivotovsky. "It will be her greatest challenge yet," said style editor Liz Beddall.

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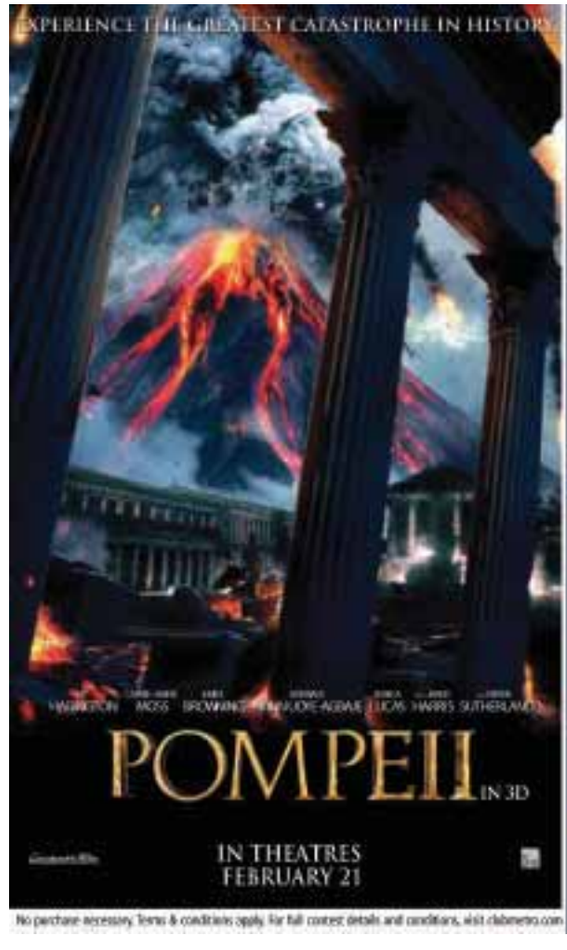
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Marie Saint talks Winter's Tale, Hitchcock

Carrying on tradition. Actress is picky about her roles, and she likes that her latest involves playing a strong female character

MATT PRIGG
Metro World News

In Winter's Tale, Eva Marie Saint plays a character who's more than 100 years old. "Made me feel young," Saint cracks, chuckling heartily. She's not that old, even if she once made out with Cary Grant, as she famously did in Alfred Hitchcock's North by Northwest, from 1959.

The film is a romantic fantasy, adapted from Mark Helprin's 1983 bestseller, that spans a century, with some characters living well past the normal life span (and in the case of Colin Farrell's thief-turned-hero, not aging either).

But Saint likes that her character is, despite her age, a Manhattan newspaper editor. "She's a professional," she says. "I just prefer to do roles where it's a strong lady and she's not ill and she's not in a wheelchair — and that may happen, and there's nothing wrong with that. But as long as I can portray somebody who still makes a difference in the world — that's what I like to do."

It's something she somewhat identifies with, too. Now in her late 80s — friendly but feisty, warm yet sharp about her long career — Saint has been keeping busy, or as much as she'd like to be. Her career is filled with breaks; she only has 20 films to her credit. This is her first on-screen appearance since playing Superman's mom in Superman Returns in 2006.

But she periodically swings by to do voice work on The Legend of Korra, the animated sequel to Avatar: The Last Airbender. That harkens back to her first job in the entertainment business: as a tour guide at NBC studios in New York, where part of her job was demonstrating how sound effects were created. (She even recreates how she mimicked a horse for me.)

No doubt she also likes that the role continues a long tradition of playing smart, independent women. She won her Oscar for playing the strong-willed sister of a slain dockworker in 1954's On the Waterfront. Rather than cash in on her success, she sought the good roles. She returned to play on television, where she had first made her name, racking up a string of Emmy nominations (she won in 1990 for People Like Us).

Even when she wound up as a glamorous undercover spy in North by Northwest, it proved a subtly challenging role. Her character is tasked with going back and forth between trustworthy and not — a femme fatale who ultimately proves the heroine.

Still, she didn't mind being treated like a movie star. She recalls how Hitchcock didn't like the clothes MGM had picked out for her, so he took her to Bergdorf Goodman, so she could pick whatever outfits she wanted.

"I sat next to him and he had the models come by. Then one walked by with that black dress [she wore in the movie] and said, 'Hitch, I like that!'" She then launches into her Hitchcock impersonation: "He said, 'Wrap it up for Miss Saint.'"

Eva Marie Saint GETTY IMAGES

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METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Shia LaBeouf ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

LaBeouf, are you really #SORRY or is this piece just a pile of bull-Shia?

Shia LaBeouf is sorry. So sorry, in fact, that he's embarked on a "performance art" piece this week at a Los Angeles gallery space entitled #IAMSORRY. According to the gallery's press release, "Shia LaBeouf is sorry. Sincerely sorry. He will be in situ at 7354 Beverly Blvd. for the duration. Implements will be provided." Visitors are invited, one by one, to enter a curtained-off room where LaBeouf sits at a table in a tuxedo with a paper bag over his head, eye holes cut out. He says nothing, responds to no questions, and then removes the bag to show that he is crying. LaBeouf is scheduled to be staring at visitors and crying through Sunday. Fans of pointing out LaBeouf's penchant for plagiarism have been happy to remark on the similarities between this stunt and Marina Abramovic's 2010 installation piece The Artist is Present, during which she would sit in a gallery and let strangers stare at her one at a time, eventually bursting into tears.

Lip-synch claims hitting Britney one more time

Britney Spears is being dogged by more lip-synching accusations after an Instagram video surfaced taken during her current Las Vegas residency that shows her microphone pack fly off her waistband, pulling her earpiece mic away from her mouth without effecting her vocal performance at all. It wouldn't be such a big deal if it weren't for claims made by Spears' team before the launch of the residency. "Britney Spears will be singing live during her show. She will not be 'lip-syncing,'" her rep said.

Britney Spears

The Word

Will $75M deal bring sizzle back to celeb cook's career?

Paula Deen has found a key ingredient to reheating her tarnished brand — a cash infusion worth at least $75 million US from a private investment firm.

The Savannah-based celebrity cook announced Wednesday that she's launched an umbrella company that will oversee her restaurants, cookbooks, product endorsements and other remaining slices of her media empire. The new company, called Paula Deen Ventures, said private-equity firm Najafi Companies is investing $75 million to $100 million to help Deen make a comeback.

Deen's fortunes took a dive last year after comments she made under oath during proceedings in a lawsuit, namely that she had used racial slurs in the past, became public. The Food Network dropped Deen, as did pork producer Smithfield Foods, book publisher Ballantine and several other companies that paid her to endorse their products.

In a statement, Deen praised the partnership with Phoenix-based Najafi and the decision to name Steven Nanula, who has already worked with Deen for the past two years, to serve as CEO of Paula Deen Ventures.

"I know this is the right decision to lead my team, as we continue to share quality products with my fans — whose love and support have built my brands," Deen said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Eva Mendes

Eva X-es out rumours that she's with child after airport opt-out

Eva Mendes knows the consequences of being picky about security. The actress recently opted out of using a walk-in body scanner at the airport, prompting speculation that she's pregnant. "You know those X-ray scanners, which are really creepy? They basically see you naked," she tells Ellen DeGeneres during an interview. "And not only that, but there's a radiation aspect to it. So I always opt out. I always ask for a personal pat-down. That was good enough reason (for people to assume I'm pregnant.)" Sure, but what about those breakup rumours circulating since she and Ryan Gosling haven't been spotted together since October? While Mendes' publicist was already quick to shoot down such reports, Mendes offers some jokey plans for Valentine's Day that pointedly do not include Gosling — at least not in person: "I'm not a big Valentine's Day person," she says. "I'll probably just order a deep dish and watch The Notebook or something. Just cry, weep."

Twitter

@EllenBarkin
Do you think I could be the "global ambassador" for Lay's potato chips?

@ActuallyNPH
I'm so proud of @RealHughJackman for hosting this year's Tony Awards and for calling me an hour ago to say, 'Suck it!'

@SarahKSilverman
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SHOPPERS DRUG MART

Guess what's coming to Danielle

Who's that girl?
Canada's Danielle Knudson only told her family and a handful of close friends that she'd booked the campaign of a lifetime. I Guess everyone else is about to find out.

ELIZABETH BEDDALL
elizabeth.beddall
@metronews.ca

When I meet up with Guess' new it-girl Danielle Knudson, she's surrounded by loose copies of her new ad campaign for the iconic brand. The spread features photos of the blonde bombshell frolicking in the late-afternoon Laguna Beach sunlight.

These images are in stark contrast to the surrounding polar-vortexed environment of our chat, which has left Danielle and I both sweater-bundled as we get warm inside the confines of the Guess boutique in Toronto's Queen West neighbourhood.

But while my pasty face and salt-stained boots give me away as a winter-whipped local, you'd think this new Guess girl, with her sunkissed skin and golden locks, was born and raised along the southern California shoreline. But make no mistake about it, she's Canadian.

Danielle Knudson says her next goal as a model is to be featured on the cover of Sports Illustrated. We'd sign off on that!
HANDOUT

You're now living the model's dream life in New York, but you were born and raised in Alberta. Is there anything you miss about home?
I loved growing up in Red Deer — I was there right until I was 18. And my family now lives just outside of Banff. Going home, I still love going home to see the mountains. We have a ski hill in Red Deer that no one knows about called Canyon Ski Area, which is kind of hidden in the middle of nowhere. I spent many years growing up there skiing.

The story of your rise to fame is an insanely quick one. As I understand you were at a shoot for another client and were asked to take a selfie, which was forwarded to Guess LA. Guess booked you that day, flew you out to LA that night and began shooting with you the next day. Correct?
Yes, about six months ago I got booked for the look book. Paul Marciano came to the shoot and met me and the agency called me and they put me on hold for everything and the rest is kind of history. It was like boom, boom, boom.

Tell me a little bit about the day of the Laguna Beach shoot. What was the general itinerary?
The campaign was actually shot over three days. We woke up very early because the lighting was beautiful in the morning — maybe 5:30. It went by so quickly. We would do hair and makeup and go to location, and shoot so many looks. We'd shoot until the sun went down.

Paul Marciano was on set with you at this shoot as well. What's he like?
Paul has been so amazing — he's been so supportive of me. Always told me to be myself. He just made me feel like I'm important to the brand — that they wanted me there.

Flash forward a year from today. What do you foresee?
My life is changing very quickly — I'm taking everything in as it's coming my way.

She's got this in the bag

Purell on-the-go hand sanitizer
$1.79, purell.com

L'Oréal Paris Colour Riche Balm
$7.96, walmart.ca

Benefit's High Beam luminescent complexion enhancer.
$32, sephora.com

Tabasco Sauce Miniature
$0.55, tabasco.com
"I put hot sauce on everything I eat."

Canadian street style

Spotted in: Toronto

Name: Ailyn

Age: 19

Occupation: Film student

What she's wearing
Blundstone boots, thrift store denim jeans, winter cape from the ROM's boutique, lace shirt from Club Monaco, and Fjallraven Kanken backpack.

Her inspiration
"Normally I go vintage, stuff you'd find in your grandma's closet. I'm a kid stuck in the '90s. This outfit, however, is my winter hipster look."

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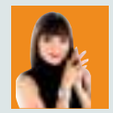

JEANNE SPACE
Jeanne Beker
life@metronews.ca

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@MrRalphRucci is a genius. Staff are artisans!"@womens weardaily: Rucci's seamstresses watch show from atelier. #NYFW

Guess who???? #MtTremblant #WeAreWinter #FreakinFreezing

Best sofas to let sleeping dogs lie

Love your pup but not what he does to your furniture? Expert tips on buying pieces that can stand up to pets

"I would always suggest a fabric with a small pattern or texture — a herringbone pattern or small check creates a great disguise."
Designer Jay Jeffers
Designer Jay Jeffers relaxes with one of his two cavalier King Charles spaniels. CAVALIER BY JAY JEFFERS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sydney Masters' dog Angus has white fur. But he loves to play and dig in the mud, so his paws are often brown. And that was a factor in Masters' choice of sofa.

"We didn't choose the lovely white sofa that I wanted. No! We chose a rich dark brown leather couch," said Masters, who shares a Manhattan apartment and a home in France with her husband, who is French, and with Angus, a West Highland terrier.

Finding furniture that dogs and cats won't ruin is a challenge. Here are some things to think about when you're buying furniture, along with some ideas for protecting it from fur, stains and scratches.

Leather

Many dog owners report that leather works well as a pooch-proof alternative to fabric. "It's that kind of glossed leather that repels water and dirt," Masters says. But leather might not work for households with cats, who may damage it with their claws, according to the American Humane Association's chief veterinary adviser Dr. Patricia Olson.

Microfibre

Some cat owners say that microfibre, a synthetic, velvety suede-like material, is a good alternative. It's smoother and less appealing to cats than knits or woven fabric they can sink their claws into. And fur — from dogs or cats — is easily removed from microfibre with a vacuum, lint roller or cloth. Microfibre can also be spot-cleaned.

Fabric

If you own pets and must have fabric-covered sofas, consider this advice from Jay Jeffers of the Jeffers Design Group in San Francisco: "I would always suggest a fabric with a small pattern or texture — a herringbone pattern or small check creates a great disguise."

And don't be afraid to camouflage your pet's fur. "In our house, the furniture is in similar colours to our pets so their fur blends in," Jeffers said.

Fabric slipcovers with zippers that are easily removed and washed are a plus. Some brands, like Ikea, sell fitted slipcovers for their sofas so they can be replaced easily.

A couch of their own

One way to keep pets off your furniture is to give them a couch of their own. Choices abound, from $30 floor pillows at discount pet chains to $1,200-$1,400 US custom B-Home brand dog beds, sold at Jeffers' design store, Cavalier — named for his two cavalier King Charles spaniels. Enchanted Home Pet sells classy dog-size sofas that look a lot like sofas for humans. They run $60 to $300 US depending on size, style and place of purchase; they're available online and in store.

A dog-sized sofa as an accent piece. ENCHANTED HOME PET/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Covering up

The simplest way to protect furniture from pets is a fitted slipcover or other covering designed to stay put and look neat. Matt Kovacs, owner of an English bulldog, Lulu, has tried a number of covers and recommends the SureFit brand. "Without the covers, furniture doesn't stand a chance."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kitty corners as big as all outdoors in a catio

When Carrie Fagerstrom was looking for a new home in Portland, Ore., her must-have list didn't include a spacious yard, plenty of closets or even a large kitchen.

Her highest priority: The comfort of her cats.

"I really wanted a house that would allow me to build a place for them," said Fagerstrom, who had visions of a catio out back.

A catio is essentially a cat's playground. It's an enclosed, covered area, much like a patio, that allows feline friends to be exposed to the outdoors, getting fresh air and scenery, while keeping them safe from predators.

"I thought it would be as simple as running wire on three sides and putting tarp overhead, but it wasn't that easy," Fagerstrom said. "It ended up being a much bigger project, but I love it."

Roughly $5,000 later, her eight cats have room to roam in a catio filled with scratching posts, climbing apparatuses and even a drinking fountain. The space also contains human seating so that Fagerstrom and her friends can enjoy it as well.

"It's a very calm and serene place," she said.

Catios got their start with cat breeders and at animal sanctuaries, but more and more cat owners have begun building them at home, according to Kate Benjamin, founder of hauspanther.com, an online magazine for design-conscious cat people.

A catio can be built in any home, no matter the size. While some people build large, elaborate ones, a small window enclosure also will work if you're short on space.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tips on building a catio

- Make sure the catio is fully enclosed, so cats cannot get out and predators cannot get in.
- Provide a view of the outdoors, and make sure fresh air comes in.
- Include toys and features your cats enjoy.
- Keep their litter box in the catio.
- Make the space pleasant for humans too, so you and your cats can enjoy the catio together.

Carrie Fagerstrom built this catio, which cost $5,000 to add at her home, so her eight cats can enjoy the outdoors, but not the harmful elements that come along with it, in Portland, Ore. CARRIE FAGERSTROM/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CONTRIBUTED

HELP SHINE THE LIGHT AROUND THE WORLD

Shine The Light initiative is a non-profit organization founded by Winnipeg dentist Brent Wong and his wife, Wendy.

The organization assists people around the world who are less fortunate or who are facing immense challenges in their lives. Wong has personally participated in 24 organized assistance trips since 2005. The organization is a true non-profit in that no one receives a salary for the work they do.

"While it can be very difficult to know which charities will give the highest percentage to the poor, we are proud to say that Shine the Light/Shine Dental profits $0, and $0 goes to administration costs," Wong says.

Tax receipts are provided for donations.

Currently, the focus of the Shine the Light initiative is on the north shore of the Dominican Republic and, specifically, in areas around Puerto Plata.

Over the past six years, Shine Dental has brought 15 groups to the Dominican Republic. Over the past four years, volunteers have helped build 16 houses.

The organization works with local Dominican and Haitian professionals to ensure that efforts are spent in areas where they will have the most impact.

For more information, please visit shinethelight.ca.

GALA RAISES MONEY FOR ALS SOCIETY

FINE DINING AND GREAT PRIZES

The ALS Society of Manitoba will host its annual Cornflower Gala Dinner at the St. Charles Country Club on April 12. Last year, this event raised more than $54,000 to help Manitoban's living with ALS/MND and their families.

This event holds the promise of fine dining, the opportunity to win great prizes (including two tickets anywhere WestJet flies), music to dance to courtesy of The Luke and Murray Two Man Band and, most importantly, the opportunity to have a lasting impact on those living with ALS in Manitoba through the funds raised at this event.

"The Cornflower Gala is one of the biggest fundraising events that the ALS Society of Manitoba puts on each year," says Diana Rasmussen, executive director of the ALS Society. "Our generous sponsors and attendees make this event a huge success each year and it's something that many look forward to attending each year."

ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis), also known as Lou Gehrig's Disease, is a life-limiting disease where 90 per cent of people diagnosed will die within three to five years, some within a few months.

For more information on the annual Cornflower Gala Dinner, including sponsorship and purchasing tickets, please contact 204-831-1510 or HOPE@alsmb.ca.

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Eat Like a Voyageur

More than maple taffy. But don't worry, maple taffy – and all your favourites – will be available at Festival.

SHEL ZOLKEWICH
River City Kitchen
winnipeg@metronews.ca

Canada's largest kitchen party—Festival du Voyageur (FDV) kicks off tomorrow with the promise of marvelous music, spectacular snow sculptures and of course, fabulous food! Let's have a look at what's on the menu.

The dining starts at La Maison du Bourgeois inside Fort Gibraltar (home base for FDV activities). The prix fixe menu includes pea soup, beef bourguignon, tourtiere, roasted veggies and more. It's $15 for lunch and $18 for dinner. For an extra $5, add crème brulee or sugar pie to your meal. For dates and times, email food@fortgibraltar.com.

Promenade Café and Wine is supplying food and drink for two tents inside fort Gibraltar. Get your Caribou (a traditional drink make of fortified wine) inside the Snow Bar. Over at the Pambian tent, it's mashed potatoes topped with pulled pork or tourtiere meat, pea soup, a massive Pork Eater hot dog and maple sugar pie on a stick.

Over at Voyageur Trading Post (CCFM, 340 Provencher Blvd.) Le Garage Café is catering community lunches from Feb. 18 - 21 and evening shows (Feb. 14 - 16 and 20 - 23).

Breakfast is served at Relais Des Pionniers (289 Dussault Ave., Sts-Martyrs-Canadiens Hall) from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m., Feb. 18 – 21. Prices start at $3.50. For group reservations call Luce Malo (204) 254-8547.

Food trucks aplenty will also be on hand offering poutine, maple taffy, bannock burgers and Beaver Tails. For all the food offerings at FDV, visit festivalvoyageur.mb.ca/en/festival/fun-food/

***

Tickets are still available for the Winnipeg Whisky Festival. Learn a little something about rye, bourbon and Scotch at this fund-raiser for the Manitoba Sports Hall of Fame. winnipegwhiskyfestival.com

Shel Zolkewich writes about food, travel and the outdoors when she's not eating, on the road or playing outside. Got a food story idea? shel@shelzolkewich.com

La Maison du Bourgeois is serving up this delectable tourtiere. SHEL ZOLKEWICH/FOR METRO

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Fall in love with a gluten-free delicacy

Sweet Week. These Flourless Chocolate Lava Cakes are perfect for any Valentine

This recipe serves 12. JEFF COULSON

Cookbook of the Week

Bringing the sexy back to chocolate

Few foods are considered as sexy as chocolate. Even its Latin name — Theobroma cacao — means "food of the gods."

The pros in the Canadian Living Test Kitchen have collected their best chocolate recipes in their book The Complete Chocolate Book.

Chapters focus on the varied, wonderful textures of chocolate treats. Craving an ooey-gooey caramel-topped cake? A dark, chewy brownie? A crispy, crunchy cookie? This book has you covered for all that and more. METRO

1. In heatproof bowl over hot (not boiling) water, melt chocolate with butter, stirring until smooth. Stir in vanilla seeds. Remove from heat.

2. Whisk in sugar. Whisk in eggs and egg yolks, 1 at a time. Whisk in cocoa powder and salt.

3. Pour into twelve 3/4-cup (175 ml) ramekins; place on rimmed baking sheet. (Make-ahead: Cover and refrigerate for up to 24 hours. Bake as directed, adding 5 minutes to baking time.)

4. Bake in 425 F (220 C) oven until edges are set and centres are slightly jiggly when lightly tapped, about 15 minutes. Let cool on pan on rack for 3 minutes. Run knife around edges and turn out onto plates. Garnish with strawberries, and whipped cream (if using).

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Ingredients

- 12 oz (340 g) bittersweet chocolate or semisweet chocolate, chopped
- 1/2 cup butter, cubed
- Seeds of 1 vanilla pod
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 6 eggs
- 6 egg yolks
- 1/4 cup cocoa powder, sifted
- Pinch salt
- 12 oz (340 g) strawberries, hulled and diced
- Whipped cream (optional)

Snack. Matzo Chocolate Almond Buttercrunch

1. Lay matzos on foil-lined rimmed baking sheet, breaking to cover sheet completely. Set aside.

2. In saucepan, bring butter and brown sugar to boil over medium-high heat; boil until slightly thickened, 2 to 3 minutes. Pour over matzos, spreading evenly with offset spatula.

3. Bake in 325 F (160 C) oven until bubbly and golden, about 7 minutes. Let cool for 5 minutes.

4. Sprinkle with chocolate chips; let stand until melted, about 2 minutes. Using offset spatula, spread chocolate over matzos.

5. Sprinkle with almonds and salt. Refrigerate until chocolate is firm, about 1 hour. Break into shards.

Ingredients

- 4 1/2 sheets unsalted matzos
- 1 cup butter
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 1/4 cups semisweet chocolate chips
- 1/2 cup chopped toasted natural almonds
- Pinch sea salt or kosher salt

This recipe makes 16 pieces. YVONNE DUIVENVOORDEN

There are a number of ways you can impress your significant other this Valentine's Day. LUMINAIMAGES/SHUTTERSTOCK

VALENTINE'S DAY! *gift guide*

Fall in love with these ideas

ASTRID VAN DEN BROEK
For Metro

Fantastic. How exactly did Valentine's Day sneak up on you? If you forgot to plan for Friday, let Deanna Lorraine help you out. This San Diego-based dating coach shares her best ideas for couples of all stages.

If you have just started dating

"Surprise her with a big bouquet at her work," Lorraine said. Or amaze your new beau with your gourmet side. "Take them to your place for candles, music and a gourmet meal you've prepared."

If you have been together a long time

"Plan a last-minute overnight trip to somewhere within driving distance or a quick flight away," Lorraine said. Have a look at travel websites to score last-minute flight and hotel deals.

Or surprise your partner with your thoughtfulness. "Pick up tickets to a concert or play they're interested in."

If you are single

Google can turn up many singles events happening on Valentine's Day. "Or create a singles event — throw an anti-Valentine's singles party," Lorraine said. "And tell everyone to invite any single person they know." Or how about taking a trip?

"Plan a trip with a friend who's single — a road trip or getaway for the weekend like New York or Vegas. So something you can look forward to together. Make it an excuse to get out of town and away from all the couples."

If you are on a budget

Create couple coupons. "Make a book of coupons to redeem for a massage or a night of me cooking dinner for you," Lorraine said.

Or get scrapbooking. "Make either a physical or online book. There's some great cheap or free software online such as Animoto that you can put together video clips and pictures with music."

If you have a family

Do the kids like to celebrate with mom and dad?

"Create a big dinner and have everyone help cook—and also cook something you normally wouldn't," Lorraine said. "Have everyone dress up, too."

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Suggestions for your sweetheart

Big Silver Heart, from the Hila Binyamin Meaningful Love collection, hilabinyamin.etsy.com.

Tissot Pinky for Valentine's Day, $395, available at select retail locations across the country, tissot.ch.

Roots Lip Pouch Prince, $26, available at Roots, roots.ca.

Hotsox Originals Socks with Red Hearts and Dots, $7.50, available at eBay.ca.

Keurig Mini comes in six delicious colours such as bright red, $100, available at Keurig.ca.

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Target kitchen essentials, including heart print placemat, $2.99, heart cake pop pan, $16.99, heart cookie pan, $5.99, heart-shaped cupcake pan with phrases, $22.99, spatula with heart print, $3.99, available at Target, target.ca.

Customizable Perfect Tea Mug, $22.250, available at DAVIDsTEA, davidstea.com.

DAVIDsTEA Sweetheart Collection, various prices, available at DAVIDsTEA, davidstea.com.

Lush Close To You massage bar, $7.95, available at Lush, lush.ca.

Shelley Purdy Blushing Hearts 14 mm ring, $350, available at shellypurdy.com.

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Recipe. Braised Osso Buco with Olive and Caper Jus

For the romantics out there, nothing says love like a home-cooked meal. This Valentine's Day consider spending a romantic night in and enjoying Braised Osso Buco with Olive and Caper Jus from celebrated Cactus Club Cafe executive chef Rob Feenie's cookbook, Rob Feenie's Casual Classics.

Pair with Buried Hope Tempranillo, $19.95.

Ingredients

- 6 pieces veal shanks (2 inches thick)
- 6 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 onion, peeled and finely diced
- 2 carrots, peeled and finely diced
- 2 celery stalks, thinly sliced
- 2 cups red wine
- 6 cups veal stock
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled and finely chopped
- 5 Roma tomatoes, crushed
- 1 lemon, zest only
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 sprig rosemary
- 5 sprigs thyme

Sauce:

- 2 cups reduced braising liquid
- 1 tbsp capers, rinsed
- ½ cup brine-cured green olives, pitted and rinsed
- ¼ cup chopped parsley and chives

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 325 F. Tie each shank with kitchen string (like a package) to keep meat on the bone.
2. Pat each shank dry with paper towel and season with salt and pepper.
3. Heat oil over medium high heat in a large fry pan and sear veal on both sides until dark brown; transfer shanks to a large roasting pan or a Dutch oven.
4. Return pan to heat and add onion, carrot, and celery. Cook until golden brown and soft. Add wine and cook for a further three minutes, then pour the vegetable-wine mixture over the shanks.
5. To the roasting pan, add stock, garlic, tomatoes, lemon zest, bay leaves and herbs.
6. Cover and place in oven for about 3½ hours or until tender (turn shanks occasionally and top up liquid if not covering).
7. When cooked, remove meat from pan and strain braising liquid through a fine mesh strainer. Place liquid in a sauce pot and skim off fat and reduce by about half. Set aside until ready to use.

Sauce

1. In a small sauce pot add reduced braising liquid and bring to a boil. Add capers and pitted chopped olives and simmer for five minutes over medium heat. Add the freshly chopped herbs just before serving.

To serve, cut off the string and discard, and, if required, reheat the shanks using either oven or microwave. This recipe makes more than enough for two. Place on a large platter, pour the sauce over top and serve.

Braised Osso Buco with Olive and Caper Jus from celebrated Cactus Club Cafe executive chef Rob Feenie. CONTRIBUTED

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Gifts with a creative flair

ASTRID VAN DEN BROEK
For Metro

Instead of red roses this year, get a balloon arrangement for your sweetheart. GPOINTSTUDIO/SHUTTERSTOCK

Forget roses — this year, you want your Valentine's Day gifting to have a creative flair to it. So what to give?

Here are a few ideas for you to steal.

Instead of chocolate ...

Get some old-school candy. Does your love have a sweet tooth? Hit a retro candy store such as Sugar Mountain and put together a basket of Nerds, Lik-a-Maids, Necco Wafers, Laffy Taffies and more for a sweet night.

Or go the opposite route and give your love a chilled bottle of wine along with a gift bag of crackers, upscale cheeses and pates to ensure a romantic night in.

Instead of red roses ...

Get a balloon arrangement. Many flower stores also sell balloon packages for someone who may get the sneezes with flowers.

Or pick up a piece of artwork at a local boutique or shop.

Instead of restaurant reservations ...

Get your inner Bobby Flay on and surprise your partner with a bag of groceries. You read that right — only your job will be to turn that bag into a gourmet meal at your place while your Valentine sits back and sips Merlot.

Or buy her favourite takeout, a bottle of wine and the kind of sappy movie that's only allowed to be seen on Valentine's Day. A cosy night at your place may just be for what your partner is looking.

Instead of a classic diamond engagement ring ...

Propose with a vintage ring you have picked out especially for her. Be sure to work with a vendor you trust to ensure you get a quality ring.

Or there are many alternates to a traditional engagement ring. Think a black diamond, a ring featuring a ruby, sapphire, emerald or topaz stone. Or you can browse craft sites such as Etsy.com to find rings featuring petrified wood, square rings, rose rings and more.

Skater's sacrifice sets up Morrison's silver

Speedskating. Gilmore Junio drops out of 1,000 metres to make way for teammate

How about having Gilmore Junio carry the Canadian flag into the closing ceremonies of the Sochi Olympics, says Denny Morrison.

How about having both long-track speedskaters lead Canada into Fisht Stadium?

Morrison, taking the place vacated two days earlier by his friend and teammate Junio, raced to silver in the 1,000 metres between a pair of Dutch skaters Wednesday to write the final chapter to a remarkable story of selflessness and doing the right thing.

"It's a dream, a fairytale story," said an emotional Morrison after earning his third Olympic medal in three Games. "It's difficult to really believe that it's happening."

Said Junio: "I think that's the big power of the Olympics. Anything can happen. Expect the unexpected."

Having come back from a broken leg the year before, Morrison agonizingly clipped a skate on his heel at the Canadian trials in December, falling 50 metres from the finish line and failing to qualify for the 1,000 metres. There was a reskate an hour later at the trials, but his tank was empty and he missed out by four-hundredths of a second.

So the 28-year-old from Fort St. John, B.C., came to Sochi with a place in the 1,500 metres and team pursuit but as a reserve in one of his bread-and-butter distances.

Speed Skating Canada then approached Junio, a 23-year-old from Calgary who was 10th in Monday's 500 metres, and asked whether he would consider giving his place up to the veteran.

"It was 100 per cent my decision. They left it in my court," said Junio, who is better in the 500 than the 1,000. "They said 'You can talk to Denny.'

"But it was an easy decision. The guy's been skating unreal these past few weeks and I wanted to see him skate the 1,000 metres."

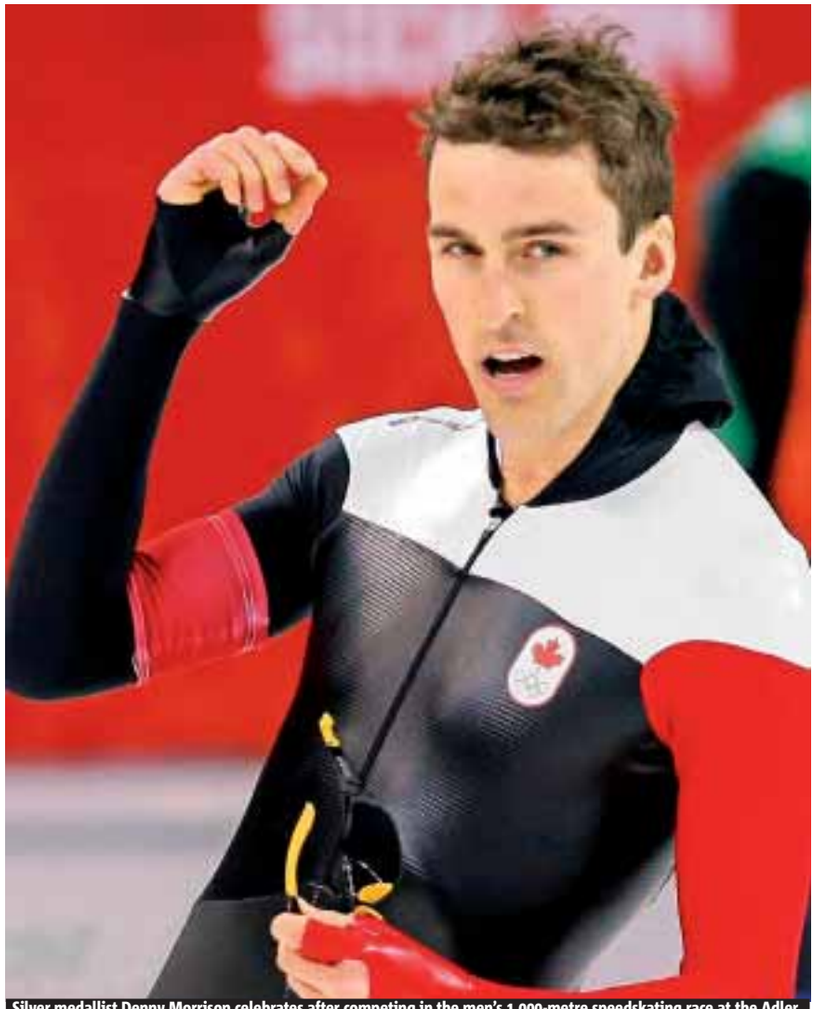
Junio also had his own reasons.

"I've a lot to learn in the 1,000 and I think the Olympics, representing Canada, isn't kind of the place to learn such lessons," he said. "We're here to perform. So I thought maybe in four years, hopefully my 500 will be good and my 1,000 will be even better, that I won't have to make this decision. Maybe someone will make it for me." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Olympic spirit

"Maybe that's something we can get behind, because I think that would be really special.... He does embody what it means to be an Olympian ..."

Denny Morrison, on the push to have Gilmore Junio as the closing ceremonies flag-bearer.



Silver medallist Denny Morrison celebrates after competing in the men's 1,000-metre speedskating race at the Adler Arena Skating Center in Sochi, Wednesday. PAVEL GOLOVKIN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ontarians leave it all on the ice to finish in fifth

Kirsten Moore-Towers and Dylan Moscovitch compete in the pairs free skate figure skating competition at the Iceberg Skating Palace on Wednesday in Sochi. IVAN SEKRETAREV/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Minutes after their program came to a smiling, giggling conclusion, Kirsten Moore-Towers of St. Catharines, Ont., and Toronto's Dylan Moscovitch were spontaneously committing to another four years.

"This is far too much fun," Moore-Towers said through a wide smile. "Yeah. Hell yeah. We say we're going to take it one year at a time, but why not, right? Dream big."

The Canadian skaters finished fifth Wednesday in pairs at the Sochi Olympics on a night Russia returned to its old ways, utterly dominating the discipline. Tatiana Volosozhar and Maxim Trankov won the gold, while teammates Ksenia Stolbova and Fedor Klimov captured the silver.

In the moment

"There was no forcing it, it just felt like a five-minute moment for us."

Toronto's Dylan Moscovitch

Four-time world champions Aliona Savchenko and Robin Szolkowy of Germany had to settle for the bronze for the second straight Olympics.

Meagan Duhamel of Lively, Ont., and Eric Radford of Balmertown, Ont., dropped from fifth after the short program to finish seventh. Paige Lawrence of Kennedy, Sask., and Rudi Swiegers of Kipling, Sask., were 14th.

Skating to "Fellini Medley" and looking elegant in all black, Moore-Towers — her golden hair pulled back with a pale pink rose — and Moscovitch skated virtually flawlessly save for their side-by-side triple Salchows. He doubled his.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Natalie Spooner jumps on top of Meghan Agosta-Marciano of Team Canada after she scored the winning goal in the third period of Wednesday's victory over the United States in Sochi, Russia. JULIO CORTEZ/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Canada wins first battle against U.S.

Women's hockey.
Agosta-Marciano's two goals lifts spirits of defending champions

Preliminary Round

Canada	United States
3	2

A 3-2 win over the archrival United States was a big boost to Canada's confidence, but history shows Wednesday's result won't mean much if the two women's hockey powers face off for Olympic gold.

But after dropping four straight exhibition games to the Americans before their arrival in Sochi, the Canadian women could feel good about themselves heading into a four-day break before Monday's semifinal.

Canada and the U.S. already had berths in Monday's semifinals locked down before their game.

Trailing 1-0 after two periods, Meghan Agosta-Marciano of Ruthven, Ont., scored a pair of goals and had an assist for the defending champions on her 27th birthday.

Linemate Hayley Wickenheiser of Shaunavon, Sask., who was Canada's flag-bearer in the opening ceremonies, scored a controversial goal and assisted on Agosta-Marciano's equalizer.

Charline Labonté of Boisbriand, Que., stopped 25 of 27 shots for the win and stoned Kelli Stack on a short-handed breakaway in the second period. Coach Kevin Dineen's choice to put Labonte in goal was intriguing because Shannon Szabados has started in all world championship finals for Canada since her shutout of the Americans in the 2010 Olympic final. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ski jumping

High winds wreak havoc on large hill

High winds delayed the first night of training for individual large hill ski jumping at the Sochi Olympics on Wednesday and later forced cancellation of a scheduled third round.

Four jumpers began the first round before officials stopped the training, wiped out the scores and restarted the round. Officials later cancelled the planned final round of the night. The large hill gold-medal final is on Saturday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MEDALS

Nation	G	S	B	Tot.
Norway	4	3	5	12
Canada	**4**	**4**	**2**	**10**
Netherlands	4	2	4	10
United States of America	3	1	5	9
Russian Federation	2	4	3	9
Germany	6	1	1	8
Austria	1	4	0	5
Switzerland	3	0	1	4
Slovenia	1	1	2	4
Sweden	0	3	1	4

WHAT CANADA DID

WEDNESDAY

ALPINE SKIING

Women's Downhill - Larisa Yurkiw, Owen Sound, Ont., 20th, (one minute 43.46 seconds, +1.89 seconds)

CURLING

Women's Round Robin Session 4 - Canada 9 Britain 6 (Standings: Canada 3-0, T-1st)

Men's Round Robin Session 5 - Canada 7 Russia 4 (Standings: Canada 2-2, T-5th)

FIGURE SKATING

Pairs Free Program - Kirsten Moore-Towers (St. Catharines, Ont.) and Dylan Moscovitch (Toronto), 5th, (131.18); Meagan Duhamel (Lively, Ont.) and Eric Radford (Balmertown, Ont.), 7th, (127.32); Paige Lawrence (Kennedy, Sask.) and Rudi Swiegers (Kipling, Sask.), 14th, (103.01).

Final Pairs Ranking: Kirsten Moore-Towers and Dylan Moscovitch, 5th, (202.10); Meagan Duhamel and Eric Radford, 7th, (199.53); Paige Lawrence and Rudi Swiegers, 14th, (161.98).

ICE HOCKEY

Women's Preliminary Round - Group A - Canada 3 United States 2 (Standings: Canada 3-0, 1st)

LUGE

Doubles Run 1 - Tristan Walker (Cochrane, Alta.) and Justin Snith (Calgary), 4th, (49.857 seconds, +0.484 of a second)

Doubles Run 2 - Tristan Walker and Justin Snith, 6th, (49.983 seconds, +0.423 of a second)

Doubles Final Ranking: Tristan Walker and Justin Snith, 4th, (one minute 39.840 seconds, +0.907 of a second)

SNOWBOARD

Ladies' Halfpipe Qualification - Heat 1: x-Alexandra Duckworth, Kingsburg, N.S., 7th, (69.75); **Heat 2:** x-Katie Tsuyuki, Toronto, 9th, (54.25); Mercedes Nicoll, Whistler, B.C., 12th , (43.50).

x- qualified for semifinals

Ladies' Halfpipe Semifinals - Katie Tsuyuki, 7th, (56.25); Alexandra Duckworth, 11th, (32.50).

Ladies' Halfpipe Final Ranking: Katie Tsuyuki, 13th; Alexandra Duckworth, 17th; Mercedes Nicoll, 25th.

SPEED SKATING

Men's 1000m - Denny Morrison, Fort St. John, B.C., **Silver Medal**, (one minute 8.43 seconds, +0.04 of a second); Vincent De Haitre, Cumberland, Ont., 20th, (1:10.04); William Dutton, Humboldt, Sask., 26th, (1:10.61); Muncef Ouardi, Quebec City, 32nd, (1:11.07).

HOCKEY

PRELIMINARY ROUND

All times Eastern

MEN

Wednesday's results

Sweden 4 Czech Republic 2
Switzerland 1 Latvia 0

Thursday's games

Finland at Austria, 3 a.m.
Russia at Slovenia, 7:30 a.m.
Slovakia at United States, 7:30 a.m.
Canada at Norway, 12 p.m.

WOMEN

Group A

	GP	W	OTW	OTL	L	GF	GA	Pts
Canada	**3**	**3**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**11**	**2**	**9**
United States	3	2	0	0	1	14	4	6
Finland	3	0	1	0	2	5	9	2
Switzerland	3	0	0	1	2	3	18	1

Group B

	GP	W	OTW	OTL	L	GF	GA	Pts
Sweden	2	2	0	0	0	5	0	6
Russia	2	2	0	0	0	6	2	6
Japan	2	0	0	0	2	1	3	0
Germany	2	0	0	0	2	1	8	0

Note: Three points awarded for a regulation win, two for an overtime/shootout win and one for an overtime/shootout loss.

Wednesday's results

Finland 4 Switzerland 3 (OT)
Canada 3 United States 2

Tuesday's results

Sweden 4 Germany 0
Russia 2 Japan 1

Thursday's games

Japan at Germany, 3 a.m.
Sweden at Russia, 12 p.m.

CANADA 3, UNITED STATES 2

First Period — No Scoring.

Penalties — Lamoureux U.S. (tripping) 4:37, Ouellette Cda (holding) 10:59, Decker U.S. (Body Checking Minor) 17:47.

Second Period

1. United States, Knight 3 (Carpenter, Schleper) 37:34 (pp).

Penalties — Duggan U.S. (interference) 32:27, Johnston Cda (roughing) 32:52, Rougeau Cda (Body Checking Minor) 36:57.

Third Period

2. Canada, Agosta-Marciano 2 (Wickenheiser) 42:21 (pp).
3. Canada, Wickenheiser 2 (Spooner, Agosta-Marciano) 43:54.
4. Canada, Agosta-Marciano 3 (unassisted) 54:55.
5. United States, Schleper 1 (Decker, Lamoureux) 58:55.

Penalties — Decker U.S. (tripping) 40:53, Pucci U.S. (hooking) 51:59.

Shots

Canada	8	11	12—31
United States	11	13	3—27

Goal — Canada: Labonte (W); United States: Vetter (L). **Power plays (goal-chances)** — Canada: 1-5; United States: 1-4.

Attendance — 4,812 at Sochi, Russia.

CURLING

All Times Eastern

MEN

Wednesday's results

Canada 7 Russia 4
United States 9 Denmark 5
Norway 8 Germany 5
China 5 Switzerland 4
China 11 Germany 7
Britain 4 Switzerland 2
Denmark 8 Sweden 5

Thursday's games

Switzerland vs. Russia, 5 a.m.
Canada vs. Denmark, 5 a.m.
Norway vs. Sweden, 5 a.m.
Britain vs. United States, 5 a.m.

WOMEN

Wednesday's results

Canada 9 Britain 6
Japan 8 Russia 4
China 7 United States 4
Sweden 7 South Korea 4

Thursday's games

Canada vs. Denmark, 12 a.m.
China vs. Britain, 12 a.m.
Switzerland vs. Sweden, 12 a.m.
Sweden vs. Denmark, 10 a.m.
Russia vs. South Korea, 10 a.m.
Switzerland vs. **Canada**, 10 a.m.
Japan vs. United States, 10 a.m.

Monkey still on Canadian lugers' backs

The team of Tristan Walker and Justin Snith from Canada slide down the track past spectators during the men's doubles luge at the 2014 Winter Olympics on Wednesday in Krasnaya Polyana, Russia. Walker, from Cochrane, Alta., and Snith, from Calgary, were a whisker away from becoming the first Canadians to win an Olympic luge medal, coming just five-100ths of a second short of a podium appearance. Tobias Wendl and Tobias Arlt of Germany left with the gold medal. NATACHA PISARENKO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Price gets first shot in gold medal defence

Men's hockey. Habs goalie to start for Canada vs. Norway; Luongo will get his turn against Austria

Even though Roberto Luongo finished the Olympics four years ago, he won't start Team Canada's run at defending that gold medal.

Coach Mike Babcock chose to split the goaltending duties out of the gate in Sochi so it will be Carey Price facing Norway in Canada's opener on Thursday while Luongo will play Friday against Austria.

Babcock delivered the news to the goaltenders on Wednesday, roughly 36 hours before puck drop of the Norway game. Babcock didn't give a rationale for why he went with this order.

"I was going to play one of them in (each of) the first two games," Babcock said. "If I had put Luongo in, you'd be asking me the same question."

Recent performance certainly seemed to give Price the edge. In his past six NHL games for the Montreal Canadiens, Price is 4-1-1 with two shutouts, a 1.15 goals-against average and .967 save percentage.

Luongo is 1-5-0 with a 3.55 GAA and .880 save percentage in his past six for the Vancouver Canucks. He appeared to accept Babcock's decision.

"We're all here to play for Team Canada, man," Luongo said.

"It's not about one player. We're all pulling the same rope. It's a team game right now. It's not about Roberto Luongo or Carey Price or Mike Smith. It's about being part of Team Canada. It doesn't matter what role you are given, you have to embrace it and accept it."

Price, who will be making his Olympic debut, said all three goalies were all mentally prepared for anyone to start the tournament. That Babcock called on him this time is a career highlight.

"I seem to have had a lot in my young life so far," Price said. "It definitely ranks up there."

It wasn't immediately clear whether Price and Luongo would dress for both games, or if Smith would get a turn. Babcock also didn't reveal if he has decided on a starter for Sunday's game against Finland.

The decision will likely be made based on how well the goalies perform in their first games. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"Like we saw last time around, things change quickly and whoever's playing doesn't matter as long as all three guys, really, are ready to play."

Roberto Luongo, who replaced Martin Brodeur as the starter in 2010

Sweden beats Czech Rep.

Karlsson tallies twice in opening win

Erik Karlsson's impressive Olympic debut demonstrated why Sweden has more than enough talent to win it all.

Karlsson scored two goals in his first Olympic game, captain Henrik Zetterberg added a goal and Sweden beat the Czech Republic 4-2 Wednesday night in preliminary-round play in men's hockey.

Patrik Berglund also scored and Henrik Lundqvist made 27 saves as the Swedes opened the Sochi tournament with a display of their formidable offensive depth.

Also on Wednesday, Switzerland defeated Latvia 1-0 by scoring with just 7.9 seconds left in the game. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Women's curling. Jones benefits from risky shot played by British skip

A missed gamble by British skip Eve Muirhead allowed Canada's Jennifer Jones to remain unbeaten in women's curling round-robin play at the Sochi Olympics.

With the clock running down and her team behind 8-6 to Canada at the women's Olympic tournament, Muirhead could have played an easy draw to the button with her last stone to take a tense game to an extra end at 8-8.

Instead, she gambled on removing three tightly bunched Canadian rocks to pick up three points for the win. The move backfired, and Canada clinched a 9-6 victory to stay unbeaten in three round-robin games.

"It was a gamble but ... that's the skip," Muirhead said. "They get the glory when they make them or the slack if they miss them."

Jennifer Jones calls a shot during her match against Britain on Wednesday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jones said she "probably would have thrown the draw to go to the extra end."

Canada will play twice on Thursday, against Denmark followed by Switzerland. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Men's curling

Jacobs rink back on top of its game to beat Russia

After a surprisingly poor start to the tournament, Brad Jacobs' rink decided to watch video clips of its victories in the national Olympic trials to fire them up.

It seemed to work, as Canada silenced a boisterous pro-Russia crowd and beat the hosts 7-4 Wednesday in men's Olympic curling action.

The Canadian rink from Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., scored four in the fifth end and held off the Russians to improve to 2-2 in the tournament. The win was a welcome relief for the Canadians, who entered the match following tough back-to-back losses to Switzerland and Sweden.

Canada is tied for fifth with Denmark in the standings. Jacobs will look to move up the rankings when his foursome faces the Danes on Thursday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Alpine skiing. Maze, Gisin race to first-ever tie

Slovenia's Tina Maze and Switzerland's Dominique Gisin took different paths on an Olympic downhill filled with flats and turns, jumps and bumps, across slender trees' shadows, along snow that was icy at the top, soft at the bottom.

Any variable could have made the slightest difference over more than two and a half kilometres. Gisin, the eighth woman down the Rosa Khutor course, was good enough early and fantastic at the end. A half-hour later, starting 20th, Maze followed a tighter line, faster than Gisin most of the way, until a mistake shortly before the final leap slowed her.

Add it all up, and they were each other's equal Wednesday. Exactly, right down to the hundredth of a second. Gisin finished in one minute, 41.57 seconds. Maze finished in one minute, 41.57 seconds. A tie. And so two gold medals were awarded, the first time that's happened in 78 years of Olympic Alpine skiing. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dominique Gisin, left, and Tina Maze both won gold in the women's downhill on Wednesday. CHARLIE RIEDEL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

First day of free agency was 'hits and misses' for Bombers

CFL. GM Walters does his best to accentuate the positives of rebuild

The Blue Bombers' biggest signing on Tuesday was former Lions import receiver Nick Moore, who was third in league receiving last season.. RICHARD LAUTENS/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The Winnipeg Blue Bombers don't have a proven starting quarterback and haven't upgraded their offensive line, but Kyle Walters likes the progress the team is making.

Winnipeg's general manager met with the media Wednesday to talk about Tuesday's first day of free agency and how the Blue Bombers' roster is shaping up ahead of the 2014 season.

"We're not the only team that didn't get everything we wanted," said Walters after the opening of free agency. "We got better (on Tuesday) and that's what I'm trying to stay positive on and focus on."

There isn't anywhere to go but up for a team that finished with a 3-15 record last season to match a franchise low in the 18-game era.

The club had some hits and misses on Tuesday, with the biggest signing being former B.C. Lions import receiver Nick Moore, who was third in league receiving last season.

Winnipeg also signed non-import receiver Rory Kohlert, who was picked by the Ottawa Redblacks in the expansion draft, and came to terms with Canadian safety/linebacker Graig Newman after he parted ways with the Saskatchewan Roughriders.

One place Winnipeg didn't get better was on its offensive line. Free agent starting centre Justin Sorenson signed with the Edmonton Eskimos after highly touted veteran free agent tackle Josh Bourke re-signed with the Montreal Alouettes.

Walters added that the Bombers will "continue to grow the guys we have" and try to gain more through the Canadian draft because "there's no short-term fix at the Canadian offensive lineman position."

Winnipeg will probably need some stellar play along that line this season after it decided to go with an unproven quarterback at the helm.

Last week, the Blue Bombers traded wide receiver Jade Etienne to Saskatchewan for the rights to negotiate with pivot Drew Willy, who signed to a two-year deal. The 27-year-old is going into his third CFL season but has started just four games.

Blue Bombers rookie head coach Mike O'Shea said at Willy's introductory press conference that he's the club's starting quarterback, but Walters added the team will look to upgrade at every position.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

CFL

Riders' NFL exodus continues

The Saskatchewan Roughriders have lost another key component of their potent offence to a retooling NFL team.

Star tailback and Grey Cup MVP Kory Sheets signed with the Oakland Raiders on Wednesday.

Sheets' move follows the departure of Weston Dressler to the Kansas City Chiefs. METRO IN REGINA

CFL

Bruce apologizes for Sam tweet

CFL veteran Arland Bruce has apologized for a crude posting on social media aimed at openly gay football player Michael Sam.

Bruce's future with the Alouettes was put in doubt when the club issued a statement to "unequivocally denounce" the comment, in which Bruce urged Sam to "submit to God." THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Weather

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
MAX: -17° MIN: -23°	MAX: -16° MIN: -19°	MAX: -12° MIN: -19°

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Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

3	2						6	9
		6	5			7		
4			9		1			
9				5		4	8	
				1				
	6	2		8				1
			2		7			5
		9			5	3		
5	8						2	4

Yesterday's Sudoku

5	3	9	8	7	4	6	1	2
1	8	2	5	3	6	7	9	4
7	4	6	2	9	1	5	3	8
9	1	8	4	5	7	2	6	3
2	5	7	1	6	3	8	4	9
4	6	3	9	8	2	1	7	5
3	9	1	6	2	8	4	5	7
8	7	4	3	1	5	9	2	6
6	2	5	7	4	9	3	8	1

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
The less you reveal about yourself, the better. You need to be more mysterious, especially at work. Keep both colleagues and rivals at arm's length and don't forget that knowledge is power.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
If you say one thing but do another, you leave yourself open to charges of hypocrisy. You don't need to cut corners or bend the truth. You have so much going for you that you will still come out ahead.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
As your ruler, Mercury, continues its retrograde phase, you need to be on your guard. It's likely that someone will try to cheat you in some way. But now that you know that, it won't be so easy.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
Your mind may be working fast and you may have come to conclusions that satisfy you but are you sure they're correct? Listen to your inner voice and act on what it tells you, even if you don't understand it.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
Like everyone, you have secrets and one could be dangerous if other people get to know about it. Make sure you don't say or do anything today that might give your opponents a clue as to what you've been up to.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
It's important that you are honest about your feelings. If you keep them to yourself, negative emotions may build up to the point where an outburst of some sort is more likely than not.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Be careful what you say over the next few days because certain people won't take kindly to you making light of things that they take seriously. Others, however, will think you are the funniest Libra ever. Choose your audience carefully.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
There is still time to make your feelings known. But if you leave it too late in the day, the opportunity will slip by and it won't come again for quite a while. Don't worry that you might be rejected.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You will get more done if you take a gentler approach to partnership matters. Put yourself in their shoes and imagine how you'd feel if someone talked to you the way you sometimes talk to them.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You may want to be open but with communications planet Mercury now moving retrograde, you would be wise not to give too much away. Anyone asking personal questions is not to be trusted.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
If you need to make some extra money then you will have to go into partnership with someone who shares your ambitions. You will also need to have a contract that commits you both in terms of time, money and effort.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You may not be as ambitious as some but you have no end of dreams you would like to see come true. One dream has your attention now, but is it a realistic dream or is it a fantasy dream? You need to decide.

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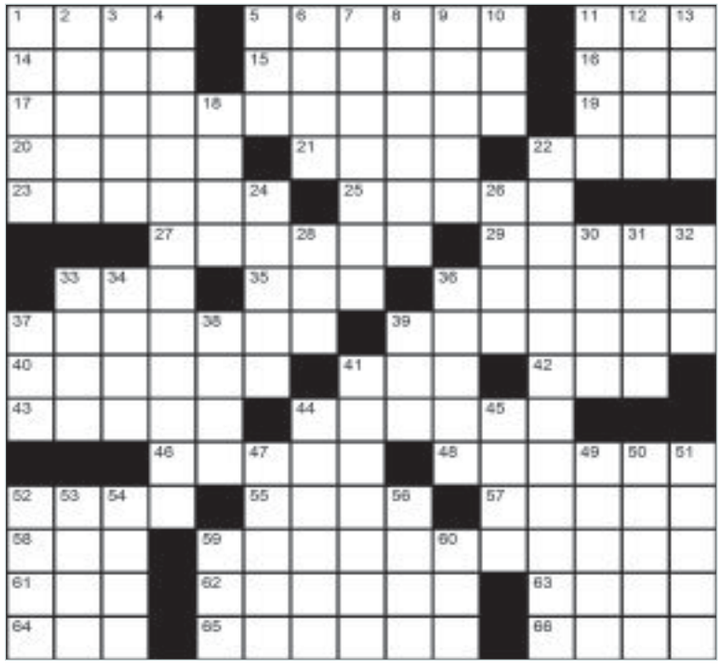
1=C, 2=E, 3=A, 4=B, 5=D

Yesterday's Crossword

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across

1. Very, in Versailles
5. Lightly blots: 2 wds.
11. Stir
14. Retro-style pop syllable
15. "Game of Thrones" actress Ms. Clarke
16. Cut back
17 "Roxy Roller" band from Vancouver: 2 wds.
19. Litigate
20. France's capital, colloquially
21. __ Brasi, "The Godfather" (1972) enforcer
22. Cob's stuff
23. "Man of Steel" (2013) director, Zack __
25. Lord's house
27. Swiped
29.Jabbed
33. 'Neat' suffix
35. Food container
36. U2 tune
37. Anastasia's family, House of __
39. Historic theatre in Russia
40. Sam Worthington movie
41. Oz musical, The __
42. Initials-sharers of Miranda's portrayer on "Sex and the City"
43. "__ __, with Love" (1967)
44. Roman orator
46. Man-made material
48. Wanting to throw up feeling
52. SOCHI 2014 - One of the Olympic symbol's five
55. Banff National Park animals
57. Trims
58. Fabric belt
59. Robin Thicke's actress wife: 2 wds.
61. Guys
62. Actor, Haley Joel __
63. Rihanna's "__ Boy"
64. Lumberjack's tool
65. Styles
66. River of Flanders

Down

1. Chef's li'l amounts
2. "Laugh-In" co-host Dan
3. Manicurist's board
4. SOCHI 2014 - Winter Olympics sport: 2 wds.
5. Billy Williams link
6. __ acetate (Banana oil)
7. Tar-like deposit found in Alberta's oil sands
8. BC's __ Valley
9. Mr. Quinn
10. Bit
11. Too
12. Glum
13. Airy
18. Old depilatory brand
22. SOCHI 2014 - Winter Olympics sport
24. Revolving mechanism
26. German-built car
28. Ms. Tyler
30. "Jeopardy": 1983 hit for The Greg __ Band
31. Greek Myth: God of love
32. Agnus __ (Mass prayer)
33. De __ (Again, in Latin)
34. "Misty" line: "Look at me / __ __ helpless as a kitten up a tree..."
36. Bakery quantity
37. Rodent
38. __ a soul
39. Pen brand
41. City in southern Manitoba's Pembina Valley
44. Structure support in architecture
45. Tabula __ (Clean slate)
47. Rent
49. Position, fancy-style
50. Lyric poem variety
51. Lou Grant's portrayer Ed
52. Tomato type
53. Wild goat
54. Ten - One = This
56. Rational
59. 1990s fad game disc
60. Liq. measures

Education for Employment

PUT YOUR MONEY WHERE YOUR HANDS ARE!

Match these hands-on professions to the median wage earned by program graduates between 2011 and 2012:

1. Production Art
2. Culinary Arts & Design
3. Pharmacy Technician
4. Network & Computer Technology
5. Industrial Welding

A. $14.11/hour
B. $17.00/hour
C. $12.06/hour
D. $19.00/hour
E. $10.86/hour

Answers are hidden somewhere on this page.

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